

Adult Literacy Contact Centre NEWSLETTER



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A project of the Adult Basic Education Association of B.C.

Project to View Literacy Programs in Four B.C. Communities

A group of six literacy educators will visit programs in Vancouver and northern B.C. in September during the first half of a two-part project aimed at observing literacy program delivery in the province.

The Program Visitation and Observation project, sponsored by the Adult Basic Education of B.C., is one of the 1990/91 literacy cost-shared projects between the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology and the National Literacy Secretariat. Coordinator of the project is Patty Bossort, past-president of the ABEABC.

The purpose of the trip is to "broaden understanding of the numerous approaches and environments that are established for delivery of adult basic education," according to Bossort. She says the tour will emphasize "talking with learners in each program to hear their feelings about the program. As well, we'll be unobtrusively sitting in on learning sessions and initiating informal discussions about the day-to-day reality." The six members will be expected to make themselves available for presentations at conferences and meetings of literacy groups following the project. Bossort adds the group members will also collaborate on a summary of

the project, to be published in the ABEABC professional journal, *Groundwork*.

Three categories are represented by the six participants — college, school district and community-based practitioners. There are two participants from each category. They are:

Lex Baas, Coordinator/Instructor, Carnegie Learning Centre, Vancouver

Sooke School District #62 (instructor to be announced)

Patricia LaPalme, Student-Tutor Coordinator, The Write Place, Parksville

Yvonne Lord, Instructor, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, Merritt

Rena Neufeld, Instructor, School District #56, Fort St. James

Jeanne Purvis, Instructor, Northern Lights College, Dawson Creek

The September trip will view programs in Vancouver, Prince George, Fort St. James and Dawson Creek. No sites are confirmed as yet.

The second half of the project, scheduled for November 3-9, 1991, includes visits to programs in Victoria, Sooke, Parksville, Nanaimo, Kamloops and Merritt. □

"Bafflegab" Under Attack

B.C.'s Plain Language Institute, a non-profit organization which works to promote the use of plain language in government, business and the legal community, has launched a "Stamp Out Bafflegab" campaign.

The Institute says "bafflegab" -- the all too common use of unclear and overly complicated writing -- "may well be the best known cure for insomnia, but it's often the worst possible way to communicate." Plain language, on the other hand, "emphasizes clear communication and the importance of writing that gets to the point. When people understand their rights and obligations, less backtracking needs to be done."

The Institute has developed a "Stamp Out" kit -- which includes stickers, a reference guide to identify "bafflegab," checklists and instructions -- aimed at identifying and correcting typical writing problems.

The kit, currently in use in the office of the provincial Ombudsman, is available free of charge to any agency or individual.

The "Stamp Out" campaign is part of the Institute's four-part mandate to:

- ❖ develop a plain language instruction system for the writers and creators of legal material
- ❖ create a library and plain language resource centre for government, business and the public
- ❖ survey plain language needs in B.C.
- ❖ develop a strategy for introducing plain language in local governments and municipalities

The Institute has contracted with the City of New Westminster to introduce principles of plain language to its municipal government and establish a precedent for other municipal governments.

The Institute is also developing plain language working groups in Vancouver and Victoria. The groups (open to new members), include lawyers, civil servants, business people and interested individuals. Plans are also underway for an international conference in the fall of 1992.

For more information, contact the Plain Language Institute at:

1500 - 555 West Hastings Street
Vancouver, B.C.
V6B 4N6
Phone: 687-8895
Fax: 687-0018

The Plain Language Institute is funded by the Ministry of the Attorney General of B.C. and the B.C. Law Foundation. □

Montreal Conference Has Literacy Component

Adult literacy will be featured at one of four general sessions of the 40th annual American Association for Adult and Continuing Education conference in Montreal, October 14-20. Serge Wagner, a professor in the Faculty of Education at the Université du Québec à Montréal who helped found several French-language Ontario and Quebec literacy groups, will speak on the topics of illiteracy and ethnolinguistic minorities, and the literacy situation in general in Canada.

The theme of the conference, which is aimed at adult and continuing education practitioners, teachers, volunteers, trainers, researchers and other professionals, is "Lifelong Learning: An Odyssey to the Future." Lise Bissonnette, publisher of the Montreal daily, *Le Devoir*, will deliver the keynote address on this topic on October 15.

The literacy session addresses one of four sub-themes of the conference. The others are: adult education administration and policies; the focus and role of adult education in the year 2000; and strategies and implementation.

The pre-registration deadline

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for the conference is September 30, 1991. For more information, contact:

American Association for Adult and Continuing Education
454 Place Jacques-Cartier, 4th Floor
Montreal, Quebec
H2Y 3B3
Phone: (514) 873-8155
Fax: (514) 954-0394 ☐

Native Literacy, Whole Language in Prince George

The Yinke Dene Language Institute in Vanderhoof, B.C. will co-host an international conference, which includes workshops on literacy and whole language programs, in Prince George in September.

The 11th annual Native American Language Institute (NALI) Issues Conference will be held at the Holiday Inn, Prince George, September 22-25, 1991. NALI is a non-profit organization (based in Oklahoma) established to "examine Native language and cultural concerns, exchange ideas and provide direction for continual development, education and research of Native language and cultural issues in the Americas." It sponsors an annual Institute which brings together traditional language practitioners and language professionals.

The Yinke Dene Language Institute was established in 1988 to preserve and promote Yinke Dene language and culture. (Yinke Dene is an indigenous expression meaning "people of the earth." Yinke Dene bands occupy 22 communities in north central B.C.) YDLI's member organizations include the Carrier-Sekani Tribal Council, the College of New Caledonia, and four school districts — Burns Lake, Vanderhoof, Prince George and Quesnel. YDLI supplies educational resources and materials to individuals, communities and educational agencies, and offers a Language Instructor Certificate program in partnership with the College of New Caledonia. Graduates of this program will present the literacy workshops at the conference.

To register, contact the Yinke Dene Language Institute at 567-9236 (Vanderhoof). ☐

Book List for Parents and Children

A childrens' book list especially designed to assist adult literacy students choose books to read to their children, is now available through the Vancouver Public Library.

The Gift of Literacy: Books to Share with Children is a 13-page list of 247 titles chosen by VPL Youth Department

Librarian Terry Clark. Clark developed the list for the Invergarry Adult Learning Centre (Surrey) so it could "build a library for its students to take home to their children." The list was intended "as a selection tool of good quality books."

Clark says the books on the list are "chosen for their adult appeal. The titles are multicultural and portray a broad range of lifestyles. The books range from about a grade two or three reading level to about grade five or six. Most are in the three, four and five level, and range from illustrated story books of 30-50 pages, to longer fiction...almost novellas. The titles are those that adults

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The Adult Literacy Contact Centre is a project of the Adult Basic Education Association of B.C. and is jointly funded by the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology; and the National Literacy Secretariat.

The Centre welcomes receiving your literacy news by phone, fax or mail. We reserve the right to edit written submissions for the newsletter.

The newsletter is published monthly and distributed on the last working day of the month. It is available free of charge to any individual or agency upon request.



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would enjoy reading to children."

The list is available at all VPL branches for the cost of photocopying. For more information contact Adrienne Horton, VPL Children's Services, at 665-3554. ☐

Language at Work Video

A video of a forum held to profile the participants in a workplace language program conducted by a Vancouver hotel is now available for loan.

Language at Work: The Pacific Palisades Program is a production of the Open Learning Agency. The video records the Workforce Education Forum, held at Simon Fraser University's Harbourside Campus on March 28, 1991. The forum was sponsored by the "Partnerships at Work" project of the Adult Basic Education Association of B.C.

"Language at Work" (LAW) is an Employment and Immigration Canada program designed primarily to assist immigrant women with English language barriers receive workplace training in literacy, language and numeracy skills. The Pacific Palisades Hotel completed last March a LAW project which involved 23 employees, through a contract with the OLA's Workplace

VCC NAMES NEW PRESIDENT

Vancouver Community College has announced the appointment of a new President. John Cruickshank will succeed Acting President Ross Carter, appointed when former VCC President Dr. Paul Gallagher left the college to

head up the B.C. Human Resource Development Project. Cruickshank has been Vice-President of Grant MacEwan Community College in Edmonton, Alberta since 1987. He will begin his new duties in November, 1991.

Training Systems consulting service.

In the video, a nine-member panel describes how the training program worked. The panel represents EIC, OLA, CAIMAW (Canadian Association of Industrial, Mechanical and Allied Workers) and the hotel management, as well as hotel employees who participated in the program.

The video is available on loan from the Adult Literacy Contact Centre and:

Tracy Defoe, Consultant,
Workplace Training Systems
Language at Work
Open College
Open Learning Agency
7671 Alderbridge Way,
Richmond, B.C. V6X 1Z9
Phone: 660-5270 ☐



What is "bafflegab"?

See page 2.

ESL Report Available Locally

The report on the delivery of English as a second language instruction in B.C., referred to in the June, 1991 *Adult Literacy Contact Centre Newsletter*, will be available in B.C. by the end of August.

Identification of Current Needs and Issues Related to the Delivery of Adult ESL Instruction in B.C. is a research report prepared by Dr. Alister Cumming (formerly of the Department of Language Education, University of B.C.) for the Ministry of Provincial Secretary and Ministry Responsible for Multiculturalism and Immigration.

To order copies of the publication, (order number VA0113) contact:

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